



## Tricare - Keeping Informed

The **TRICARE** website <http://www.tricare.osd.mil> remains an **excellent source of information** for our military members (including retirees and Reserve) and their families. Many changes are being made to entitlements, as outlined in Flag Voice 126 as a result of the FY 2001 National Defense Authorization Act. For those with access to SWSIII and/or a home PC/laptop, I **recommend that you bookmark this site** and refer to it often for changes in TRICARE. If desired, by clicking on a web address towards the bottom of the TRICARE homepage, you will be included on the **TRICARE email list regarding updates to TRICARE entitlements**. Its easy, fast, and an excellent way to keep up to speed on TRICARE issues. Should you sign up for the TRICARE emails, in the confirmation email TRICARE will send you a notepad document containing most all phone numbers necessary to navigate the TRICARE system. Of course, **our 1-800-9 HBA HBA number** should be added to the list as the **most authoritative source** of any TRICARE information for Coast Guard members.

## Beneficiaries Advised To Save Receipts For TRICARE Coverage Not Yet Implemented

Given the **significant number of new TRICARE benefits** and competing requirements in the 2001 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), many programs that Congress authorized as being effective immediately when the NDAA was signed into law on Oct. 30, 2000, **will be phased in over the next six to twelve months**. Among these new programs that will be implemented over time are TRICARE coverage for school required physicals, reimbursement for certain travel expenses for TRICARE Prime beneficiaries, and reduction of retiree catastrophic caps.

In the meantime, TRICARE Management Activity (TMA) is **advising beneficiaries to save receipts** (as well as explanations of benefits and other claims-related information) for these covered services and benefits obtained from Oct. 1, 2000, for application to the fiscal year catastrophic cap, and from Oct. 30, 2000, for the other benefits until program implementation so they can **later obtain reimbursement** from the managed care support contractors in their regions. TMA will widely publish the date upon which beneficiaries may submit claims with the required receipts, and the managed care support contractors will adjudicate claims for dates of service retroactively to the effective date established by Congress.

The **new benefit covering school physical examinations** applies to all TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries ages five through 11. It does not cover physical examinations for sports activities.

TRICARE Prime beneficiaries referred to **specialty care providers located more than 100 miles away** from their primary care managers, will be **reimbursed for their travel expenses**, according to the provisions of the NDAA.

The existing **catastrophic cap of \$7,500 will be reduced to \$3,000 for retirees**, their family members and their survivors.

**As soon as funding is secured for these initiatives, TMA officials will spread the word** through all available communications channels.

The latest information about TRICARE benefits may be obtained through the Military Health System/ TRICARE Web site at <http://www.tricare.osd.mil>. Beneficiaries may also contact the managed care support contractor in their region, the nearest TRICARE service center or TRICARE beneficiary counseling and assistance coordinators at a military treatment facility.

Regards,

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